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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/773,598	02/02/2001	Fumiyasu Hirai	010105	6246
23850	7590	04/07/2004	EXAMINER	
ARMSTRONG, KRATZ, QUINTOS, HANSON & BROOKS, LLP 1725 K STREET, NW SUITE 1000 WASHINGTON, DC 20006			ANDRES, JANET L	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		1646		

DATE MAILED: 04/07/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/773,598	HIRAI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Janet L. Andres	1646	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 April 2004.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 3, 4, 6-9 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 8 and 9 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 3,4,6,7 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

RESPONSE TO AMENDMENT

1. Applicant's amendment filed 8 January 2004 is acknowledged. Claims 3, 4, and 6-9 are pending and under examination in this office action. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code, not included in this action can be found in a prior office action.

Claim Rejections Maintained/New Grounds of Rejection

2. Claims 3, 4, 6 and 7 are newly rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential steps, such omission amounting to a gap between the steps. The minimum requirement for method steps includes a contacting step in which the reaction of the sample with the reagents necessary for the assay is recited, a detection step in which the reaction products are quantified or visualized, and a correlation step describing how the results of the assay allow the determination of success. See MPEP § 2172.01. The omitted step is a final correlation step between the removal of the TGF- β and the determination that the body fluid has been treated.

3. The rejection of claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over the '322 patent, the '548 patent, or the '933 patent in view of the '178 and '994 patents is maintained for reasons of record in the office action of 11 September 2003 and applied to new claims 6 and 7.

Applicant has amended the claims to require treatment of a body fluid and argues that the prior art does not teach treatment of a body fluid but rather teaches purification. Applicant's arguments with respect to the teachings of the prior art are found to be persuasive. However, as written, the claims require only the removal of TGF- β from a body fluid (see paragraph 2 above) and thus are not different from the prior art. There is no definition of the word "treatment" in the

specification that would limit the claims to a process that does not affect the integrity of the body fluid, rather than a process that merely uses it as a starting material.

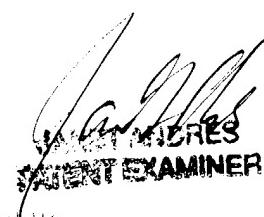
CLAIMS 3, 4, 6, AND 7 ARE REJECTED. CLAIMS 8 AND 9 ARE ALLOWED.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Janet L. Andres whose telephone number is 571-272-0867. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday and every other Friday, 8:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Yvonne Eyler can be reached on 571-272-0871. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Janet L. Andres, Ph.D.
2 April 2004



Janet L. Andres
PATENT EXAMINER